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October 20, 2014

Patrick P. O'Carroll, Jr.
Inspector General
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Inspector General O'Carroll:

I write to request an immediate investigation into the payment of Social Security benefits to individuals who participated in Nazi persecution during World War II. After the conclusion of the war, we now know that thousands of people who participated or were complicit in the atrocities of the Holocaust fled to the U.S. and lied about their pasts to become American citizens. According to the results of an Associated Press investigation published on October 19 (article enclosed), it is estimated that these individuals were paid millions of dollars in federal benefits (i.e. Social Security) even after the Department of Justice Office of Special Investigations (OSI) identified them as Nazi war criminals. Due to varying circumstances, it seems that several dozen criminals left the U.S. without completing trial before an immigration judge and were never issued a final order of removal. Without this order of removal, Social Security benefits were never terminated. I am deeply concerned about these reports, and believe that an investigation into the matter is appropriate and should be launched immediately.

In a letter dated September 15, 2014, I wrote to the Social Security Administration Acting Commissioner Carolyn Colvin requesting information, including amounts paid to living and deceased Nazi criminals who left the U.S. before being officially deported. To my disappointment, I was only provided with a list of individuals who had been deported and therefore had received no benefits after their removal (see my letter and response enclosed). I am particularly troubled by the notion that there is no mechanism to terminate benefits for individuals OSI identified as Nazi war criminals for whom a denaturalization process had started. In Acting Commissioner Colvin's response, she states that SSA does "not track information on individuals who voluntarily depart from the United States." It seems to me that appropriate allocation of Social Security benefits and a full assessment of payments made to Nazi war criminals – a class expressly defined in Social Security laws as ineligible for benefits – should be top priorities for the agency.

As a co-author of the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act which created the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group (IWG), I

strongly support the release of all records documenting the involvement of the U.S. Government with Nazi war criminals. An Inspector General investigation into this matter will make transparent the total amount paid and number of Nazi war criminals who received or continue to receive Social Security benefits. This information is vital to determine the best remedy for the situation and ensure that we make informed policy decisions going forward. Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,


CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress